



Summary of DCAMM Contractor Panel & Roundtable October 20, 2014

Improving M/WBE Partnerships and Increasing Diversity Employment

Accelerated Energy Program Labor and Workforce Advisors Meeting

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Roundtable Participants

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Samantha Bond, Bond Brothers
Frank Callahan, BTC
Douglas Chavez, DCAMM
Chris Collins, Energy Conservation
Carole Cornelison, DCAMM
Jim Freeley, DCAMM
Karen Courtney, FFCM
Hakim Cunningham, BWA
Hope Davis, DCAMM
Rick Davis, ESCO
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John Fitzpatrick, SDO
Tsuyoshi Fukuda, DCR
Jacqueline Gorman, Jacqueline Electric
Vincent Graziano, RISE/Thielsch

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Jesse Jeter, MMCA
Andrea Laing, DCAMM
Monica Lawton, ASM
Ken Lortie, DCAMM
Paula Lyons, EOLWD
Ron Marlow, MassHousing
Susan Moir, UMB
Reggie Nunnally, SDO
Michael O'Brien, Gilbane
Greg Janey, Janey Construction
Jennifer Pinck, Pinck and Company
Andre Porter, OSBE
Susan Quinones, MWPA
Tony Ransom, DCAMM
Erin Ross, DCAMM
Liz Skidmore, NERCC
Danielle Skilling, Gilbane
Ken Smith, YouthBuild Boston
Raymond Soohoo, DCAMM

Stephen White, DCAMM
Cairo Williams, Urban League
Jenna Ide, DCAMM
Shelley Webster
Andrew Burke, Groom Energy
Edmond Henry, Dependable
David Wallace, EOLWD
Brenda Haas, MBTA
Steve Villani, Walsh Brothers

Meeting Agenda

AEP LABOR AND WORKFORCE ADVISORS

October 20, 2014

1:00-3:30

1 Ashburton Place, 21st floor, Boston

1:00 – 1:15	Welcome and Introductions
1:15 – 2:05	Contractor Panel and Discussion: M/WBE Subcontracting successes and challenges
2:05 – 2:55	Contractor Panel and Discussion: Workforce Diversity successes and challenges
2:55 – 3:15	Open Discussion Connection with other DCAMM/IFM/Construction initiatives
3:15 – 3:30	Closing remarks and next steps

Creating M/WBE Partnerships: Successes and Challenges

Panelists

- Rick Davis, Director of Marketing, ESCO
- Michael O'Brien, Vice President, Gilbane
- Robert Belyea, Project Development Supervisor, Constellation
- Jacqueline Gorman, President, Jacqueline Electric and Contracting
- Warren S. Anderson, CEO, W.S. Anderson Electrical, Inc.

Key Themes and Suggestions: Creating M/WBE Partnerships

Theme: Improve the flow of information among all parties

(1) Provide more vibrant information about M/WBEs on the SDO website

Suggestion: SDO listing could include a link to M/WBE firm's own website.

Suggestion: SDO listing could include a space for M/WBEs to provide additional information on capabilities and past work.

Suggestion: SDO listings could allow for "sub-codes" to facilitate quicker sorting and identification of appropriate contractors

(2) Provide information on successful low bidders immediately upon selection

Suggestion: MassPort's system is a good example for others to consider.

Suggestion: Information should go online promptly and sent to those who signed up for it.

Comment: "No one should have to make a public records request for this information."

Key Themes and Suggestions: Creating M/WBE Partnerships

Theme: Deepen partnerships through training/mentoring of M/WBEs

(1) Identify best practices at existing public and private programs

- Some companies offer training in subjects such as project management, estimating, scheduling, compliance issues, bonding, insurance, financial management, and more
- Graduates often receive a certificate
- Participation may involve being assigned a mentor/business contact

(2) Business management issues should be a focus for M/WBE training

Suggestion: DCAMM could offer training directly, or link M/WBE firms to providers

Suggestion: DCAMM could host a peer-to-peer “community of practice” for networking

Key Themes and Suggestions: Creating M/WBE Partnerships

Theme: Expand the pool of M/WBEs in targeted categories

(1) Is it within SDO's mission to "recruit" M/WBEs in targeted categories?

Suggestion: With contractor input, identify contractor categories that lack enough M/WBEs.

Suggestion: Within SDO and/or DCAMM legal boundaries, "recruit" new M/WBE firms.

(2) Larger prime contractors should actively go beyond their usual M/WBE subs

Suggestion: Primes can sponsor events such as opportunity fairs to familiarize M/WBEs with the industry.

Suggestion: Encourage first tier subcontractors to develop wider pool of M/WBE firms .

(3) Continue innovations aimed at increasing small business participation

Examples: Small Business Certification, AEP Utility Vendor Program, Job Order Contracting

Key Themes and Suggestions: Creating M/WBE Partnerships

Theme: Cash flow and other business issues can be M/WBE barriers

(1) Alleviating cash flow difficulties can help expand M/WBE participation

Suggestion: M/WBE panelists advised taking “baby steps” towards company growth and actively negotiating with contractor partners for favorable payment terms.

Suggestion: Consider encouragement of bi-monthly (every two weeks) payment schedules

Suggestion: Encourage banks to allow signed contracts to serve as collateral for borrowing.

Suggestion: Provide or find resources for small business financial management training for M/WBEs and others.

Comment: DCAMM earned compliments for paying more quickly than other agencies.

(2) M/WBEs may need financial assistance in getting to the next level of growth

Suggestion: Determine whether/how the state and/or private sector partners can increase access to low (or no) interest capital through grants and loans targeted to M/WBEs who want to grow.

Recruiting & Hiring a Diverse Workforce: Successes and Challenges



Panelists

- Jennifer Pinck, Founder and President, Pinck and Company
- Vincent R. Graziano, CEO, RISE Engineering
- Stephen A. Villani, Project Executive, Walsh Brothers
- Edmund Henry, President, Dependable Masonry Construction Co.
- Christopher J. Collins, President, Energy Conservation

Recruiting & Hiring a Diverse Workforce: Successes and Challenges

Theme: Need to attract more women to underrepresented fields

(1) Improve outreach to students and young women

Suggestion: Incumbent female workers should be sent to speak to girls in the schools

Suggestion: Use field trips and site visits to demonstrate nontraditional careers

Suggestion: Increase the number of pre-apprenticeship offerings with a focus on women

Suggestion: Use video and social media more creatively and intensively

Suggestion: Emphasize economic benefits of nontraditional careers

(2) Improve working conditions for women in nontraditional fields

Suggestion: Require diversity training for all workers

Suggestion: Demonstrate through leadership action and enforcement that working conditions that are not favorable to women will not be tolerated

Recruiting & Hiring a Diverse Workforce: Successes and Challenges

Theme: Use the proven tools we already have more consistently

(1) Study and emulate examples like the UMass Boston project, as applicable

Suggestion: Political and leadership support is critical

Suggestion: Widespread stakeholder involvement is essential

Suggestion: Adoption of the goal and plan by prime contractor is necessary

Suggestion: Capacity for “walk-ons” can help immensely

Suggestion: Monitoring and measurement is required (deleted Public monitoring)

Suggestion: Success increases with trained compliance/assistance staff onsite regularly

Suggestion: Apprenticeships and pre-apprenticeships can improve diversity

Suggestion: Treat goals as requirements and enforce them as such

Comment: “It’s frustrating to hear us talking about this issue over and over again over many years with less-than-satisfying results. Feels like many of the “barriers” are actually just excuses.”

Recruiting & Hiring a Diverse Workforce: Successes and Challenges

Theme: Promote and advance women and people of color

Comment: “Actively promoting women and people of color to management and leadership roles - and into entrepreneurship - is an effective way to diversify the entire workforce.”

Theme: Partner with, and fund, diversity advocacy groups

Comment: “Increasing diversity requires working directly with groups from underrepresented communities. We have deep connections and successful strategies and programs.”

Theme: Treat diversity goals like requirements

Comment: “What are the consequences for failing to meet diversity goals? If there aren’t real business consequences, are we sending a message that goals don’t matter?”

Comment: “We need to use both carrots and sticks. What incentives can we offer?”

Comment: “Falling short of a goal doesn’t always mean there wasn’t a good faith effort.”

Theme: Leadership is critical. Diversity happens when leaders want it.

Suggestion: Public and private leaders should make diversity a top priority, with clear goals, and meaningful consequences (positive and negative) that hold managers accountable.

Suggested Next Steps

- (1) Review comments and recommendations with AEP and DCAMM leadership and managers.
- (2) As appropriate, share comments and recommendations with other agencies, organizations and stakeholders whose involvement or leadership would be necessary for action.
- (3) Identify items which are appropriate for AEP or DCAMM to act on unilaterally, if a decision was made to do so.
- (4) Where decisions are made to take independent action, proceed to identify desired outcomes, assign responsible parties, create a schedule for action, and set a date for evaluation of results.
- (5) Share progress with Advisors (and other invited guests) at a future meeting of the AEP Labor and Workforce Advisory Group.